

Testimony in Opposition to Assembly Bill 163

April 11, 2007

Paul Heinen

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Department of Natural Resources opposes AB 163.

Exempting any wetland from water quality certification is a bad precedent. However in the case of the city of Tomahawk, where we are working with them *right now to find a route for their hospital*, it is especially troubling.

Secretary Hassett has personally met with Senator Breske twice on this issue and directed staff to ask the City to look at a bridge option. If that option works, he will consider approving it. DNR Northern regional director John Godzialski and staff and I met with the mayor of Tomahawk, city officials and Senator Breske in January and we came away with a plan to work with the city to delineate the wetland areas and figure out a route that could work.

This will not be a simple process, we all know that. It is a hospital so we understand the special need here. But the current law that we use to work through these issues should be used to find the safest, but most environmentally sound alternative.

We are working with the city in good faith. We ask you to not approve AB 163.



**Wisconsin
County Code
Administrators**

April 10, 2007

Representative Scott Gunderson
Chairperson-Committee on Natural Resources
Room 7 West, State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

RE: Assembly Bill 163

Dear Representative Gunderson:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Wisconsin County Code Administrators (WCCA). WCCA is a statewide organization of professionals that are employed by counties to administer a wide range of state and local regulations pertaining to land-use and environmental health.

The Wisconsin County Code Administrators are opposed to Assembly Bill 163.

Issues relating to single exemptions from the DNR water quality certification process and from requirements for approvals from the DNR are degrading to the environment and compromise the integrity of the permit process. It is understandable that the hospital would want an alternative route for emergency vehicles but with additional planning there may be alternatives without filling the wetlands. In addition, if the DNR denied a water quality certification, the wetlands must be an exceptional resource and should not be destroyed.

WCCA respectfully requests the Natural Resource Committee not support the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Michelle J. Staff
Second Vice-President, Wisconsin County Code Administrators
Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Department
320 S Main Street, Rm 201
Jefferson, WI 53549

Copies:

Representative Jim Ott
Representative Garey Bies
Representative Daniel LeMahieu
Representative Mary Williams
Representative Terry Moulton
Representative Lee Nerison
Representative Jeffrey Mursau
Representative Spencer Black
Representative Louis Molepske
Representative John Steinbrink
Representative Ann Hraychuck
Representative Gary Hebl
Representative Cory Mason
WCCA Executive Board
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